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Your Personal Guide to the Senior Community Service Employment Program

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The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) was established as part of the Older Americans Act of 1965. The primary objectives are to provide:

- **Job training opportunities and supplemental income to persons 55 years of age and older who meet economic criteria established by the U.S. Department of Labor.**
- **Job market transitioning.**
- **A source of needed but otherwise unfunded work in communities and on public lands.**

The Forest Service is a national sponsor of the program and utilizes enrollees in various roles supporting its regular activities. The positions cover a wide range of activities, including clerical, construction, maintenance, education, engineering, and many outdoor tasks associated with managing forest lands.

Congratulations! You are now part of the Senior Community Service Employment Program, which is highly respected by the USDA Forest Service. Enrollees in the program have established a reputation as reliable, productive, and resourceful contributors to the Forest Service mission of “Caring for the Land and Serving People.”

This brochure is designed to give you a brief overview of the program. We encourage you to ask any questions during the course of your enrollment. We will do our best to keep you informed and prepared for your mission, and we are sure you will be pleased with your role as part of the Forest Service team.

Orientation

Your supervisor will provide an orientation to the Forest Service, SCSEP, that will include the following information:

- Program objectives
- Training
- Rights and duties
- Forest Service history
- Adverse actions
- Transition to regular employment
- Supporting services
- Responsibilities
- Political activities
- Job safety
- Ethics and conduct

Hours of Training

You are entitled to on-the-job and formal training at no less than an average of 20 hours each week. It is possible to participate a maximum of 1,300 hours per program year (July 1 to June 30), but you may do less, depending on budget constraints. At the beginning of each program year, an income eligibility recertification and a physical examination are required.

Pay

You will be paid no less than the hourly Federal or State minimum wage, whichever is higher. Some enrollees' wages may be increased because of supervisory duties or special skills required by specific jobs.

This program does not authorize or pay for overtime.

Your first paycheck will probably not arrive for at least 3 1/2 weeks due to processing procedures. However, after that time you will receive a check every 2 weeks.

Social Security will be deducted from your pay even though you may be receiving a monthly Social Security pension check.

You may select not to have income tax deducted from your pay.

Leave

You will earn 1 hour of excused absence (leave) for every 20 hours of program participation. You may accumulate leave hours throughout the year, which may be carried over after July 1 to the next program year. There is no carryover limit. There is no provision to pay you in cash for the unused hours of accumulated leave. This leave time is counted in your 1,300-hour allotment.

Earned leave hours may be used when you are sick and for medical and dental appointments, personal business, or vacation.

It is important that you notify your supervisor in advance when you plan to use your leave.

Holidays

You will receive regular pay if a Federal holiday falls on your regularly scheduled job training day. The following are Federal holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Labor Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
- Columbus Day
- Presidents' Day
- Veterans Day
- Memorial Day
- Thanksgiving
- Independence Day
- Christmas

Training

The Forest Service will provide you with training and work experience to enhance your job skills and employability.

Placement

Our objective is to help you by training you for higher paying jobs and to assist you in obtaining regular employment. You should gain self-confidence, acquire new job skills, or upgrade the skills you already have. The goal is for you to leave this work-training program when you have a good full- or part-time job waiting for you with a private employer, and in some cases with the Forest Service itself. Many enrollees have left the program to take exciting and rewarding jobs. We want to help you do the same. It is your responsibility to cooperate with the program administrator by attending job interviews and locating and accepting employment. This will create opportunities for additional people to enroll in and benefit from the SCSEP.

Recertification

You must be recertified annually to remain in the program.

Physical Examination

The program provides funding for a physical examination at reasonable cost, before you report to work-training, and once a year thereafter. The purpose of this annual physical examination is twofold:

- To ensure that you are not asked to perform duties that would be injurious to you.
- To inform you of any physical condition that may require medical attention.

Enrollee Problem Resolution Process (EPRP)

You are afforded due process to resolve adversities toward you by utilizing the Forest Service EPRP as established, or you may file a grievance with the U.S. Department of Labor. Contact your local SCSEP Coordinator for more information in completing either process.

Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP)

As an SCSEP enrollee you are covered by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act for injuries that occur during this job training. If you suffer an SCSEP-training-related illness or injury, contact your supervisor immediately.



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Counseling

Counseling as it pertains to your training or personal situation is available upon request. Your supervisor can help you or can arrange an appointment with appropriate sources.

Unemployment Insurance

Persons who have participated in the SCSEP are not eligible for State unemployment compensation because the program does not contribute to State unemployment programs.

We wish you success in the Senior Community Service Employment Program and hope that it will be an exciting and enjoyable experience for you.

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To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or call (202) 720-7327 (voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.

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Human Resource Programs

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